

[ORIGINAL.]

A WAYWARD MOOD.

BY MAURICE SILINGSBY.

O, come, my love, and we will sit
 Beneath yon palace roof of oaks,
 And watch the sombre shadows flit,
 Where all night long the raven croaks;
 For I am in a wayward mood,
 And all the world looks dark to see;
 And thoughts new-fledged, a dismal brood,
 Hang like black shadows over me.

Alas! what is the world to me—
 Its joys, its triumphs and success:
 When I have lived so madly free,
 And squandered all that could us bless?
 A surfeit I!—a rosebud thou!
 Fresh blowing on this summer morn,
 Which unto me a winter is—
 Alas, a withered husk outblown!

[ORIGINAL.]

A SHIP CAPSIZED:

—OR,—

THE FATE OF RICHARD BRAXTON.

BY JOHN H. UNDERWOOD.

DURING a protracted stay in Calcutta, several years ago, I formed an acquaintance with a young man by the name of Richard Braxton, whose brief history had been rather a strange and eventful one. He was a Yankee boy, a native of the same State as myself; and circumstances threw us so much together in Calcutta that we became quite intimate, and before we separated he related to me the story of his life.

From the first hour of our acquaintance I had felt convinced that his was no ordinary mind, that his intellectual powers were vast and varied; and every subsequent interview developed some new evidence that nature had intended him for a bright and shining light in some sphere of intellect.

And yet something was lacking—there seemed to be no spring or elasticity to his mental powers—they existed, and were aided and strengthened by a liberal education, but, so to speak, lay usually inert and dormant. When occasion called for their exercise, they were used without an effort, but with so little confidence and spirit as to make it evident that some powerful cause had operated upon Richard Braxton to deprive him of self-esteem, and crush the manhood within him.

His affecting story revealed this cause—cruelty on the part of those from whom he had a right

to expect friendship, sympathy and protection—and now his name is added to the long, dark list of victims to “man’s inhumanity to man.”

He was the son of a physician, who resided, at the time of Richard’s birth, in the midst of a moral, refined and social community; but a few months later, impelled by that inconsistent love of change which is often exhibited by the best of men, he removed to a town where the manners, tastes and character of the people were the reverse of those he had left, and here his son spent the years of his childhood.

Doctor Braxton was a highminded, fearless and independent man; he saw and despised the vices and meanness of his fellow-citizens, and not unfrequently administered a scathing rebuke. This rendered him unpopular as a companion; but his medical skill was so well appreciated; that many sought his aid in time of sickness and trouble, who secretly both hated and feared him.

The family and relatives of his wife resided in this place, and formed no exception to the general description of the inhabitants as I have given it. At first they were inclined to fraternize with Doctor Braxton, but soon discovered that they had no sympathies in common. Their low tastes and habits were distasteful to him, and their littleness of soul disgusted him; his love of the beautiful, the noble and the good they were unable to appreciate, and secretly despised.

A growing coldness ensued, which soon increased to positive enmity, and all the annoyances that petty spite and narrow-minded malice could suggest were heaped upon Doctor Braxton by those with whom he had become connected by marriage. He repaid their efforts by keen ridicule and undisguised contempt, and they on the other hand neglected no opportunity to wound his feelings or injure his reputation and practice, while in their inmost souls they swore to be fully revenged at some future time.

When Richard was twelve years old, his father died, suddenly, and in the performance of his duty. While standing at the bedside of a patient, and encouraging the sufferer with cheerful words, the dark messenger came without the slightest warning. He was stricken down in an instant, as he had always expected to be, knowing full well the fatal tendency of a disease of the heart from which he had long suffered. He lived only a few hours after the attack, but became fully conscious a few moments before his death, and calmly addressed the circle of weeping friends who stood around him.

He begged them not to mourn for him, but to feel that he was leaving them for another and a better world. The “valley of the shadow of

death" had no terrors for him; he had not delayed the preparation for this inevitable event until stretched on a bed of death; but had ever striven to walk uprightly and deal justly. He had done what he could, and for the forgiveness of that wherein he had been remiss, he depended with a full and childlike faith upon the promises of a merciful and ever-loving God. As for himself, he was ready and happy to go, but for those whom he was leaving to the mercies of a hard and unfeeling world, he felt a weight of sorrow which could not be expressed in words.

The relatives of his wife were present, giving way to all the outward manifestations of grief; and perhaps for the time their grief was sincere and heartfelt. Perhaps the influence of the chamber of death, and the dark shadow of the dread angel's wings, had humanized and softened their hard hearts; perhaps in that awful moment "when the veil between the present and the future grows thin," they could not look upon that well-known form and noble countenance, and still cherish the fiendish sentiments of anger and revenge toward him whose earthly career was so nearly ended, and who was so calmly awaiting the expected summons. In charity let us hope that so it was, let us hope that to all their other sins they did not add the damnable crime of deceit and hypocrisy toward a dying man.

"My friends," said the doctor, "we have not always manifested toward each other a spirit of Christian forbearance and forgiveness of injuries. I am conscious that I have often irritated you by severe and uncharitable language, but I beg you to forget and forgive all, and not allow the remembrance of my faults to actuate you in your conduct toward my family. Richard is not an ordinary child; he has a mind beyond his years, and an appreciation of the noble and good, that renders him a thoughtful and peculiar child. He can easily be influenced by kindness, but is so extremely sensitive that a course of cruel or severe treatment which would only rouse the opposition or curb the waywardness of a child cast in a coarser mould, would crush the spirit of my boy, make him hopeless and despairing, and ruin his prospects in life. Therefore I beseech you to treat him tenderly, and not break his spirit by unkind words or deeds. Promise me that my wishes shall be regarded."

The mourners assured him that it should be so, and Mrs. Horton, his wife's sister, and her husband, his most unrelenting enemies, declared that they would never injure the boy in word, thought or deed, but ever protect and befriend him.

"Now lettest thou thy servant depart in

peace," murmured the dying man, while his countenance assumed an expression of serene peace. "Farewell—God bless you all."

And as the spirit ebbed away, those present in the room were nearer heaven than ever before. Could the influence of that solemn scene have been lasting, they would have gone forth better men and women, to finish their journey of life in a manner more acceptable to their Creator and Preserver than they now are doing.

For a few weeks after the death of Doctor Braxton, Mr. and Mrs. Horton preserved an attitude of friendship toward the bereaved family; but soon the "ruling passion" began to manifest itself in a want of sympathy and uncharitable words. The doctor had left a small property, barely sufficient with strict economy to maintain his family. At the time of his death, Richard was a pupil at an academy in a neighboring village, and after a brief interval resumed his studies there.

One of the first efforts of Mrs. Horton was to persuade his mother to take him away from the academy, and send him to the district school, giving as a reason, the fact that it would be less expensive, though her real motive was an envious desire to deprive the boy of those privileges of learning which he so highly valued, and prevent him from gaining a better education than her own children would receive.

In this, however, she was unsuccessful. Mrs. Braxton had a too yielding disposition, but in this one instance she was firm and decided, and Richard remained at the academy. Then commenced a course of persecution, a series of annoyances, by which the envious Mrs. Horton strove to vex and irritate the boy, and render his life unhappy. Her husband, a rough, ignorant farmer, gladly assisted her in all her efforts, and many of their neighbors also united to persecute an unoffending child, and thus gratify their devilish malice toward his father.

It would require volumes to describe all the methods by which they accomplished their purpose; it is sufficient to say that they succeeded only too well, in rendering Richard Braxton's life unendurable. His mother was unable to protect him; she allowed herself and Richard to be trampled upon without resistance, and in proportion as she yielded they encroached upon her rights.

A worm will turn when trodden upon, and Richard made no secret of the hatred which he felt toward Mr. and Mrs. Horton, which increased their enmity, and at length he begged to be sent away from home, that he might thus escape from their persecutions. His mother

consented, and in spite of the opposition of her self-appointed guardians, sent him to an academy in another State.

Here he remained for several years; a new world and a new life seemed opened before him. Here his uncommon abilities and genial disposition commanded respect, and endeared him to those around him. His progress in learning was rapid, and relieved from the weight which had depressed his spirits at home, he passed at once from the timidity of boyhood to the confidence of a man who is conscious of possessing faculties of mind above the ordinary capacity of his fellows.

During his last year in this place, he became attached to a young lady of exceeding loveliness, both of mind and person, one of those

—“belongs, heavenly fair,
Too finely framed to bide the brunt more earthly creatures bear.”

She was a pupil at the academy, and a short acquaintanceship was sufficient to prove to Annie Langford and Richard Braxton that the mutual sympathies which they cherished as congenial souls, were the beginning of a more tender relation; and almost before they were aware of the fact, they grew to love each other with a depth of tenderness and devotion such as is often written of, but seldom really known.

This was another motive to action—a spur to the growing ambition of Richard Braxton—a fresh charm to make existence delightful; and for a few months his measure of happiness seemed full to overflowing. At the age of eighteen he left the school, and the lovers parted with some regret, but high hopes for the future.

Richard's means were too limited to enable him to commence a college course at once, as he desired, but a gentleman with whom he had recently become acquainted, had offered him a lucrative situation in his counting room, and he hoped in two years to procure the means of finishing his education.

Health, hope, happiness, all were his; the world looked fair and bright before him; he was willing to devote himself to patient, self-sacrificing toil, and he had no fears but that success would crown his efforts.

“His aims were glorious and his thoughts intense.”

The image of the pure being who so truly loved him, and for whose sake he would gladly endure toil and privation, or brave danger, and even death, was enshrined in his heart, and if perfect happiness is possible to human beings, such was his.

I would gladly lay down the pen, and end this

“short and simple annal” here, allowing the imagination of the reader to carry out the story of Richard Braxton to a happy termination; but justice compels me to tell the truth, and the whole truth, however painful the recital.

Immediately after leaving school, Richard spent a week in the home of his childhood, and was surprised and delighted to find that his relatives had apparently forgotten their former hostility toward him. They treated him with more than kindness, and seemed to be trying to make amends for the cruelty of the past. Of an honest, confiding disposition himself, he doubted not that all this show of friendship was genuine, and joyfully hailed what he considered the advent of a more peaceful relation than had heretofore existed; but, alas! he knew not the depths of deceit of which the human heart is capable when depraved by the indulgence of unlawful passions, and unrestrained by a single principle of justice or humanity.

Like wolves in sheep's clothing, or devils in the guise of angels of light, they concealed a spirit of bitter, fiendish, unrelenting hate toward one who had never injured them, beneath an exterior of kindly feeling, and waited only for an opportunity to stab their victim to the very soul.

An opportunity soon offered. While Richard was at home, his mother was suddenly called to the deathbed of a dear friend, leaving him alone. Mr. and Mrs. Horton insisted upon his making their house his home while she was absent, and rather than wound their feelings by a refusal, he accepted their proffered hospitality, and remained with them until the time had arrived when he was to commence his labors at the counting room of his friend.

At his departure, Mr. and Mrs. Horton expressed a hope that he might be successful and happy, and their apparent sincerity gratified him exceedingly, while with the magnanimity of a noble mind he forgave and forgot all that he had suffered from their unkindness.

During his first day in his new situation, his comprehensive mind took in the details of his range of duties so thoroughly, that his employer at once perceived that he had secured an invaluable assistant, and resolved to do even more for him than he had promised. The next morning Richard went to the counting-room and seated himself at his own desk; no one else had yet arrived, and he was alone. As he bent over the ledger, his thoughts went back in retrospection to the happy hours he had spent with his beloved Annie; and then again his fancy painted bright pictures of the future time when he should call

her his own, and be ever blessed with her sweet presence. Suddenly his day dream was broken by approaching footsteps; he felt a rude grasp upon his shoulder, and looking up, beheld the hard, inflexible countenance of Jacob Horton, in whose eyes he read an expression of triumphant malice.

"Richard," exclaimed Horton, "give me back the money which you stole from my house!"

"What do you mean, sir?" he asked, indignantly, while every particle of blood retreated from his face, leaving it like that of a marble statue.

"I mean that I have discovered your robbery, my strong box broken open, and fifty dollars stolen, and all this done by you, for no one else has been in the room. Unless you immediately confess and restore the money, the law shall take its course, otherwise, I will spare you the disgrace."

Had a thunderbolt descended from a cloudless sky, it would not have so much surprised Richard as did this sudden and false accusation. For a few moments he was completely stupefied, and unable to speak, but recovering somewhat his presence of mind, and supposing that Horton was laboring under a mistake which careful investigation would explain, he said:

"Mr. Horton, is it possible that you believe me capable of crime, of robbery? I assure you, sir, I have never taken from you or from any one else so much as the value of a pin in a dishonest manner."

"O, that kind of talk wont go down with me; I know better. The last night that you was in my house, my strong box, which was under the table in the room where you slept, was broken open, and robbed, and my wife says she heard you hammering and filing after she went to bed, but didn't think much of it till after she found the money was gone. Come, own up, and restore the money, or by heaven you shall suffer the penalty of the law!"

"Again I assure you that I am innocent, so help me God."

"Well, we'll go to your boarding-house, and see what we can find there. I've got a man with me to assist in the search—I am prepared for you."

Richard gladly agreed to this proposal, knowing that he had placed nothing in his trunk—which he had not opened since leaving Horton's house—which could in the remotest manner convict him of the crime charged against him. A rough, brutal-looking fellow was waiting outside, and Richard accompanied the two men to his boarding-house, after leaving a note

on his desk, telling his employer that necessity had called him away, but that he should soon return.

"Give me the key," cried Horton, as they reached Richard's room.

The key was handed him, and he opened the trunk. Nothing was visible at first but clothing, but on removing some of this, a canvass bag was seen, which Horton drew out with an exultant cry.

"Before I open this," said he, "I will show you this list of the bank bills of which I have been robbed." And he produced a card having the description of various bank bills of different denominations written upon it.

He then untied the bag, and drew out first a bunch of picklocks. Chuckling with delight, he put in his hand again, and this time produced a hammer and file, and at the bottom of the bag found a roll of bills, which, on being opened, were found to answer precisely to the description on the card.

"There," cried Horton, "do you still play innocent, you rascal?"

When the bag was discovered in the trunk, Richard had started back with astonishment, and while the various contents were being removed, he had remained like one in a dream. He now replied:

"In the presence of God, to whom the secrets of the heart are known, I declare that I have never before seen that bag or its contents. Some vile wretch has formed a plot to ruin me, though I cannot imagine who could have been so cruel."

"O, ho, ho!" laughed Horton, "that's a good one; but let me tell you, my fine bird, that you will find it difficult to prove that to the judge and jury."

"Come along with me," said Horton's companion.

"What would you do?" asked Richard.

"Take you to the lock-up; come along."

"Richard," exclaimed Horton, "as the money's all here, and this is your first offence, I will spare you the disgrace of a trial, if you will confess the crime in the presence of this witness. Whether guilty or not," he continued, with a meaning look at Richard, in which the victim read triumphant hate and malice, and instantly perceived who was the author of the devilish plot, "the proofs are entirely against you. For certain reasons a full confession will serve my purpose as well as to have you tried, convicted, and imprisoned, as you certainly will be if the affair passes out of my hands. Consider well what you have to gain or lose. On the one

And you are free as air, and the secret will be known only to your friends, whose interest it will be to keep it concealed; on the other, open disgrace, and all your future prospects forever blasted."

Richard's brain reeled, as he contemplated the terrible fate which threatened him, and from which he saw no escape.

"Confess to a lie? Never!"

"Very well, come with us, then, first to your employer, and then to the jail!"

"Stop one moment. Does my mother know of this accusation?"

"Yes."

"And does she believe me guilty?"

"Certainly she does, and prayed upon her knees that you might confess, and thus save her from disgrace and death."

"She believes me guilty!" said Richard, slowly, and with forced calmness. "Then let me have time to think."

He buried his face in his hands, and a tempest of conflicting emotions swept over his soul. He saw that a refusal of Horton's request would bring upon him a fate worse than death, and what was still worse, would render his mother miserable for life. Could he confess to a lie and thus save all this? The temptation was great, the sudden shock had deprived him of the power to withstand it, and in a moment of weakness he yielded! Who can blame him? Who can say that he would not have done the same under like circumstances, when, as a drowning man who catches at a straw, the mind seeks any means of escape from an impending fate?

Horton was satisfied, and Richard was free, but at what a cost! How suddenly the darkness of midnight had descended about him at noon-day! He returned to the counting-room, and mechanically pursued his labors, then went sadly home at night to spend the long night hours in agony and unavailing regrets at his criminal weakness in yielding to the tempter.

For weeks he lived in misery; his hope, courage, and confidence in mankind were gone, and to add to his unhappiness, he found that the whole circle of his relatives had been informed of his crime, (?) and regarded him with suspicion. His employer perceived the change in his appearance, and sought to gain his confidence, but in vain. Disgraced, humbled and broken-spirited, Richard vowed never to let the happiness of his beloved Annie be alloyed by connection with a miserable object like himself, for this great and undeserved affliction had induced a morbid state of mind, and he saw all things as through "a glass darkly," and he wrote her

a farewell letter, informing her that circumstances had recently transpired which made it impossible for their bright dreams ever to be realized. He was unworthy of her, and begged her to forget him and be happy. To this letter he received an immediate answer, which a stern sense of duty compelled him to return unopened, and from that time he never heard from her again.

In the meantime, some of his relatives, at the instigation of Horton, decided that he ought to be sent away to sea to reform him. One of those persons, a merchant, and a cruel, hard-hearted man, proposed to find him a situation in a whale ship, saying that some ship, whose master was noted for his tyranny, would be best suited for this purpose. His mother opposed this plan, but with her usual indecision allowed her objections to be overruled.

Richard was informed that his relatives intended to send him to sea. Once he would have replied, indignantly, that he was old enough to take care of his own affairs; but now he had lost his former spirit, and passively submitted. He had a natural dread of the sea, but was glad to escape from the cruelty of his relatives in any way, and prepared to depart whenever he should receive orders to do so.

From some cause, Marston, instead of procuring him a situation on a whaler, had him shipped in a merchantman, the *Traveller*, for Calcutta, and when he sailed, he cared not where he was going, what was to become of him, or how soon he might die. He performed his duties to the best of his ability, but took no interest in them, or in the various employments and amusements of his shipmates, who set him down as a churlish, stupid fellow.

When I first saw him in Calcutta, he had a sullen, downcast look, and the appearance of one who feels that every man's hand is against him, and that he is despised and hated by all around him; but after he had become convinced that I really felt a kindly interest in him, he grew more social and communicative, though nothing could remove the expression of deep despondency which had become habitual to him.

The ships to which Richard and myself respectively belonged, were expected to sail from Calcutta on the same day, and on the preceding evening we met by appointment in Tank Square. He was more downcast than usual, and when I spoke in pleasant anticipation of a favorable homeward passage, and a speedy re-union with our friends, he replied, mournfully:

"I do not think I shall ever see home again. Something tells me that I shall soon die; but even if I should reach home, there are no friends

to greet me but my mother, and it would be far better to sink to an ocean grave than to drag out a miserable existence, under the curse of suspicion."

"Nonsense," I replied, "do not give way to such gloomy fancies. You will reach home safely, and your relatives will have by that time forgotten their enmity, and give you a cordial welcome. Cheer up, look at the bright side of the picture, exert yourself to succeed in life, and if you can amass property you will be respected, though you were the greatest villain that ever walked the earth."

"The latter part of your remark is true," he exclaimed, bitterly, "in republican America. 'An empty pocket's the worst of crimes,' and the possession of wealth a more favorable recommendation than a whole catalogue of shining virtues; but I do not wish to live, and were not suicide a crime, would long ago have escaped from the hell of my own thoughts, which sometimes drive me almost to madness, when I reflect upon 'what might have been.'"

"Do not allow your mind to dwell upon such things. You are too young to be disgusted with life; forget the past, enjoy the present, and in the future all will be well."

"No, no, it is too late; I am discouraged, and can never be happy. I have a strong presentiment that I shall soon meet a violent death. Take this package of papers, and if I never return to my home, deliver it to my mother. It contains the story which I have related to you—a true account of the circumstances of that fiendish plot by which I was ruined. I forgive all my enemies, and hope that my relatives will do justice to my memory."

I took the package, and promised to do as he requested, though I considered his "presentiment," as he called it, to be one of the vagaries of a diseased mind. We soon returned to our ships, which early next morning left their moorings and got under way. In the bustle of leaving port I had nearly forgotten Richard's mournful prediction, but it was soon recalled by a terrible incident. Was his anticipation of approaching death really a warning from another world? Had a supernatural power so acted upon his mind as to give him a single glance into the future, or do "coming events cast their shadows before?" These are questions which we cannot answer; they are among the things which must ever remain mysteries to "creatures of a mortal ken."

The navigation of the Hoogly River is difficult and tedious to loaded vessels of large size. The river is filled with sandbars, many of which

are impassable except at extreme high water. Thus ships are frequently compelled to drop their anchors and wait for the flood tides, and six to ten days are sometimes consumed in the passage from Calcutta to the Sand Heads at the mouth of the river, a distance of only one hundred and eighty miles.

The Boneta, to which I belonged, and the Traveller, hauled out from their moorings with the same tide, and both taking steamers, kept near together for two days, by which time we had reached a point in the river about half way between Garden Reach and Diamond Harbor, where we had remained over night at anchor, just above a broad shoal.

At daybreak, on the morning of the third day, the sleepers were aroused by the call:

"All hands turn out—up anchor—ahoy!" And soon the steady, monotonous click of the windlass broke the stillness of the morning. The towboat which had lain at anchor in shore through the night, was brought in ahead, and the hawsers by which she was attached to the ship were hauled aboard and made fast.

Slowly the ship was drawn up to her anchor, as the slack chain was hove in, then with a heave and tug the "ground hook" broke clear of the mud, and was soon swinging at the cathead.

"Go ahead, sir," shouted our pilot from the forecastle to the captain of the steamer, and before the answering "Ay, ay, sir" had reached us, the steamer's wheels began to move, our "leading strings" tautened out, and again we were plunging down the Hoogly.

"Heave the lead," said the pilot to his assistant, then turning to the mate, he exclaimed, "Get thirty fathom of chain forward of the windlass as quick as you can, sir, we can't go but a few miles this time."

The cause of this order was the fact that only a mile below the shoal over which we were now passing, was another bar, and by the time we reached it, the tide would have fallen so far as to make it impassable. The mate was not aware of this, however, and made no particular haste in overhauling the chain, supposing it would be ready by the time it was needed.

Just as our anchor broke ground, we heard the cry of "Up anchor!" on board the Traveller, which laid an eighth of a mile above us, and our pilot, turning to the captain, said:

"I fancy my brother pilot on the Traveller overslept himself this morning; if his men don't work pretty lively, he'll get into a scrape."

While some of our men, under the mate's direction, were getting the chain forward of the windlass, for ready letting go the port anchor,

the pilot stood on the forecastle, closely watching the steamer's course, giving directions to our helmsman, and scanning the various landmarks on the left bank of the river with a careful eye. At length he exclaimed :

"Have you got that chain ready?"

"Not quite, sir," replied the mate.

"Thunder! I told you to be quick about it. How much have you got?"

"About twenty fathom, sir."

"Well, clap a stopper on there quick, and stand by your anchor. Starboard a, little; steamer ahoy!"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Run half speed."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Six fathom—quarter five—five fathom—and a half—four," sung out the leadman, as the successive casts were made with great rapidity.

"Stand clear the chain," cried the pilot.

The mate was at the port anchor, top maul in hand, and men were stationed at the hawsers to let them go, the moment the anchor fell.

"Quarter less four!" cried the leadman.

"Hard a starboard!" shouted the pilot.

"Let go the—hold on all!"

"And a half three!" yelled the leadman, springing inboard from the chains, and leaving his lead line in the water, as the ship rolled over to starboard with a sudden jerk that took every one off his feet.

For ten seconds, perhaps, the ship fell down to starboard, till everybody thought she was going over, and the water rushed into the ports. She had grounded, and the tide, which runs with a greater velocity in the Hoogly than in any other part of the known world, had rolled her right over; in half a minute, she would have "turned turtle." Had she been on an even keel, no power on earth could have saved her; but she was two feet deeper at the stern where she had grounded, and by the presence of mind and skill of the pilot, who knew the fact, she was swung round as on a pivot, and pulled off diagonally.

The instant she began to roll over, the mate in his excitement had raised the top maul to let go the anchor, but the pilot sprang towards him and arrested his arm, crying :

"Hold on that anchor, for heaven's sake! Hard a-port. Put on all your steam," he shouted to the steamer, and the hawsers tautened out till every strand seemed ready to burst asunder with the tension. But they were stout Manilla ropes, and just as the starboard rail was within six inches of the water, the ship moved a little, then glided smoothly off into deeper water, and instantly righted.

"Now you may let go the anchor," exclaimed the pilot, for the first time releasing his savage grasp upon the mate's arm. "Right your helm—let go your starboard hawser—let go the port one, so."

"That was truly touch and go," said the captain, who had come forward.

"It was all of that," replied the pilot. "If you had offered to sell me your ship and cargo for half a rupee (twenty-five cents), at the moment we grounded, I should have refused the offer; however, a miss is as good as a mile. Is breakfast ready, sir? I feel exceedingly sharp-set after this little excitement."

The captain laughed at the nonchalance of the pilot, and informed him that breakfast would be ready in a few minutes; then telling the mate to let the men go to breakfast, he walked aft.

In the excitement and anxiety concerning the safety of our own ship, I had entirely forgotten the Traveller; but while the men were hastening to the galley for the beef kid and bread barge, and their "hot, wet and dirty," I glanced astern. There she was, apparently close to the place where we had grounded, but I doubted not that her pilot had been warned by the sight of our narrow escape, and would prevent a like accident to his own ship, and so went in to get my breakfast. Scarcely had I got seated, when I heard a rush and a bustle on deck, and the next moment the order from the mate for all hands to come on deck, and lower away the boats! Out we ran to see what was the matter. It was apparent at a glance.

The Traveller had grounded on the bar, where there was now six inches less water than when the Boneta had struck, had rolled over on her side, and there she lay with her masts under water, and her port yard arms sticking up perpendicularly. Everything movable that had been on her deck was floating down toward us—hen-coops, barrels, seachests, and firewood—and we could plainly see the heads of many of her crew in the water, as they grasped at anything which would buoy them up.

I sprang into the gig which hung at the davits, followed by three others, and the moment the boat touched the water we unhooked the tackles, and bent to our oars for a pull up the swiftly flowing stream. In the meantime, our launch and jolly boat were got overboard and manned.

We had picked up one poor fellow who had clung to a hen-coop, and floated towards us, when I perceived Richard Braxton far out in the river, and borne unresistingly along without so much as an oar to keep him afloat. By this time the boats from the Traveller's steamer were picking

up the men, the other two boats from the Boneta were close behind us, and I pointed out the receding figure of my friend to the crew of the gig, and begged them to save him.

"Ay, ay, we will," they cried, and turning the boat's head toward the middle of the river, we pulled with all our strength, in the hope of heading him off before the current should carry him past us. But it was impossible, though there was scarcely three times the boat's length between us when he floated by, and answered our hail, in a feeble tone, saying that his strength was nearly spent, and that he could not keep his head above water much longer.

"Avast pulling the port oars—pull away the starboard ones—so now, together, pull like tigers!" I cried, and heading directly down the stream, our boat flew on like the wind.

"We are gaining on him; bend your oars and break your backs!" cried the bow oarsman.

At this moment Richard sank beneath the surface, but instantly re-appeared, and tossing his arms aloft, exclaimed:

"Too late, too late—I am lost!"

Not twenty feet now separated us, and I shouted:

"Bear up one minute longer, Richard, and you are saved."

"Too late!" he repeated. "Remember your promise; tell my friends all. Try to see Annie; tell her that my last thoughts were of her. Heaven bless you for your efforts to save me. May you be happier than I have been. Good-by!"

The last word ended in a gurgling moan, and just as I could almost touch him with my oar, the turbid waters of the Hoogly closed over the form of Richard Braxton, who had sunk to rise no more.

Thus his prediction was fulfilled, and thus the delivery of his papers, which I had accepted to gratify what I considered a foolish whim, and his dying message, had become a sacred trust which I must religiously fulfil. With heavy hearts—for the rough tars in the gig had been moved to tears at Richard's sad fate, and wept like children as they resumed their oars—we pulled back to the Boneta, where we learned that six of the Traveller's crew beside Richard Braxton had found a watery grave. The ship would probably be a total loss, and it may well be believed that a deep feeling of gratitude for our own remarkable escape pervaded the crew of the Boneta.

We had a quick and prosperous passage home, and almost immediately after landing, I sought out Richard's mother, and broke to her the sad intelligence of her son's death. I delivered the

package of papers, and hastened away to escape being a witness to the frantic grief of Mrs. Braxton. Since that time I have frequently seen her, and have been informed of the effect which Richard's dying confession had upon his hardhearted relatives.

At the earliest opportunity I wrote to a person with whom I was somewhat acquainted, and who resided in the same town with Annie Langford. To my great surprise, his answer informed me that she was dead. About a year previous to the date of his letter, a great and sudden change had come over her; a deep despondency had settled upon her, and from that time she had declined, until on a day, which I found to have been during the same week in which Richard Braxton had perished in the Hoogly River, she had died, of consumption, my informant said, but I knew that it was of a broken heart. She had doubtless supposed that Richard had deserted her, and hence her illness and death.

Mrs. Horton has become a maniac. Remorse, and the terrors of an accusing conscience have unsettled her feeble mind, and now she is expiating her guilt toward her unfortunate nephew in a terrible manner, being constantly haunted with the belief that he is seeking her life.

Mrs. Braxton is tottering slowly but surely toward the churchyard, a miserable, broken-hearted woman.

Jacob Horton still lives, and still holds his head as erect as ever, but in the still hours of the night, does he not sometimes see the pale, cold form of his victim, pointing with spectral finger toward the place where he shall receive the reward of his wicked deeds? All who know the circumstances connected with the fate of Richard Braxton, despise him, and when he dies, he shall go down

"To the vile dust from whence he sprang,
Unwept, unhonored and unsung."

As to the robbery, as the reader has doubtless ere this suspected, and as Mrs. Horton confessed, it was planned by herself and her husband, who contrived to place the money in Richard's trunk, and thus furnish a damning proof against him. Their fiendish plot has caused much misery, and will one day recoil upon their own heads with fearful power.

PURITY.

Yet was there light around her brow,
A holiness in those dark eyes,
Which showed, though wandering earthward now,
Her spirit's home was in the skies.
Yes, for a spirit pure as hers
Is always pure, e'en when it errs;
As sunshine broken in the rill,
Though turned astray, is sunshine still.—MOONS.

A SONG.

BY WILLIAM BLAKE.

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he, laughing, said to me:

"Pipe a song about a lamb."
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again."
So I piped; he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe,
Sing thy songs of happy cheer."
So he sang the same again.
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book that all may read."
So he vanished from my sight,
And I plucked a hollow reed;

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs,
Every child may joy to hear.

[ORIGINAL.]

THE SAILOR'S BRIDE.

BY MRS. CAROLINE ORNE.

ONE of those wild March storms, such as wail along the seacoast, as if mourning over the sorrow and desolation they are destined to carry to many a heart and home, had spent its fury. There were rifts in the black clouds, and it was only now and then that a heavy gust swept by, succeeded by a low, melancholy sigh, like a sob of agony wrung from a human heart.

Though near midnight, the widow Selwyn and her daughter Mary, who were the sole occupants of a brown cottage near the sea, about half a mile from Plymouth, had not thought of retiring to rest. They still sat by the fire, which no longer brightened the room with a steady, cheerful blaze, but with its dim, fitful gleams, cast shadows on the wall, which to Mary Selwyn, as she sat pale and silent, seemed like phantom shapes, mocking and menacing her with their strange, uncouth gestures. When the old clock, swinging its pendulum in the case of polished oak, which reached from floor to ceiling, commenced striking twelve, she rose for the twentieth time and looked out of the window.

"Does the storm appear to be over?" said her mother.

"Yes, but its work of destruction is already accomplished."

"Don't speak so despondingly, Mary. I

heard Captain Westerly, who is a first-rate judge, say no longer ago than yesterday that the Penguin was a good, staunch ship, and that she had rode out many a storm which had strewn the shore with wrecks."

"It never could have rode out this storm, if near the coast, which, according to the last news received, there can be no doubt but that it was."

Mrs. Selwyn made no reply to this, for she knew that there was every reason to believe that her daughter's words would prove true, and that Mordaunt Hartley, mate of the Penguin, and as frank, warm-hearted a young man as ever trod a vessel's deck, had found his last resting-place beneath the foam-crested waves, which could be seen from the window. He had for several years been betrothed to Mary, and they were to have been married when he returned.

Mary, who had been watching the wild tossing of the waves—for the moon had broke through the clouds, and was shining in full splendor—suddenly turned away from the window.

"I am going over to the cliff—will you go with me, mother?" said she.

Mrs. Selwyn answered by raising the lid of a large trunk and taking from thence their cloaks and hoods. As they stepped from their door, they saw that there was a light in the house of Mr. Whitman, their next neighbor, by whom, and his two sons, they were soon overtaken.

"Was there any chance for vessels near the coast, during the dreadful storm we've had?" asked Mrs. Selwyn.

"We must hope for the best," he replied; and then added in a low voice, so that Mary might not hear him, that vessels thrown upon the flats—and there would be little chance of avoiding it—were almost sure to go to pieces.

"And those on board?" said Mrs. Selwyn.

"Will be lost—no human arm can save them."

They soon reached the shore, and after proceeding a short distance, arrived to where the channel set in on the beach, the waters being stayed at full tide by a bold shore. Here dark objects, in the shape of bales, boxes and spars, were rushing by—showing that at least one merchant vessel must have been wrecked. Mr. Whitman, who had brought a coil of rope with him, to which was attached a hook, succeeded in throwing it so as to draw something ashore, which at once attracted Mary's attention. It proved to be a seaman's chest, on the lid of which the initials "M. H.," from being cut through the coating of dark paint, were plainly discernible in the moonlight. No one could see, beneath the shade of her deep hood, how white

the lips were which said in a low, quiet voice—
 " 'Tis Mordaunt's chest."

Stepping so near the water's edge that the foam-wreaths broke at her feet, she bent forward, eagerly watching the objects which continued to rush by, as if, borne on the swift, impetuous current, she expected to see the owner of the chest. A human being did at last appear; and, as he sped by, quick as thought the upturned face caught a gleam of the white, ghastly moonlight. But the dark, sunburnt features which were thereby revealed, were a stranger's—not those of Mordaunt Hartley.

"Come, Mary," said Mrs. Selwyn, going to her daughter and taking her by the arm, "we must go home now! It won't do for you to stay here in the cold any longer."

"Just wait a few moments, till he comes, and then we will all go together," Mary replied.

"The shock has proved too much for her," said Mr. Whitman, in a low voice, to Mrs. Selwyn, "and she doesn't exactly realize what has taken place. A little rest will restore her to herself, I trust, if she can be persuaded to return."

"Try to persuade her," was Mrs. Selwyn's answer. "She will think that you know better about it than I do."

Mary proved less pertinacious than they had apprehended, for on Mr. Whitman's representing to her that there was little or no probability that Mordaunt Hartley would return that night, though, if he should chance to, he would not fail to let her know, she consented to accompany her mother home.

If there had remained the shadow of a doubt, as to the fate of the Penguin, it was removed by the return of daylight, which revealed portions of the wrecked vessel, and bales of merchandise, such as were known to compose the cargo, strewn along the beach.

The chest, on the lid of which were cut the initials of Mordaunt Hartley's name, was conveyed to Mrs. Selwyn's cottage; and as there was the appearance of its not being water-tight, it was broken open in the presence of Mr. Whitman and others, that the contents might be saved from injury. In it, besides various articles of clothing, many of them made by Mary's own hands, was a letter to her, which he, probably, had never found opportunity to send. There was likewise a parcel, on which was written "For Mary," which contained, among other things, one article that brought bitter tears to the eyes of Mrs. Selwyn. It was a piece of India muslin of the finest texture, and she knew that Hartley had purchased it for Mary's bridal dress.

In the meantime, Mary, stricken with fever, lay unconscious to all that was passing around.

Weeks and months had glided silently away, and autumn had commenced dropping her clusters of rubies, and braiding her chains of gold among the rich summer foliage. The day was near its close. A golden glory flushed the western sky, making it look so clear and transparent, that it almost seemed as if the eye might pierce its depths, and catch glimpses of a brighter world beyond. Seated on the gnarled roots of an old oak which nearly overshadowed a little eminence, whence could be seen a part of Plymouth Harbor, was Mary Selwyn. There was a sad, wistful expression in her large brown eyes, as now and then a white sail, tinged with the sunset glow, appeared for a few moments, and then rounding a little headland, was lost to view. Soon the twilight shadows began to fall darkly around, yet she still remained, while almost unconsciously, she half sung, half chanted in a low, sweet voice, the stanza by Tennyson:

"And the stately ships go on
 To the haven under the hill;
 But O for the touch of a vanished hand
 And the sound of a voice that's still."

"Mary!"

The sound brought her to her feet in a moment.

"There never was but one voice which could speak my name in that way," she murmured, pale and trembling, "and that one has been hushed such a long and weary time, I hear it now only in my dreams."

"But you don't dream now, Mary." And Mordaunt Hartley, who stood in the deep shadow cast by the tree, emerged into the open moonlight, and stood before her.

"Don't dream?" she repeated. "Is it not a phantom I see, that's come to mock me?"

"It is no phantom," he replied, clasping her hands in his.

"No, Mordaunt, I know now it isn't; and yet in the long, lonely nights, I have so many times listened to what seemed to me your voice, mingling with the moaning of the sea. They told me 'twas all a phantasy—that my fever hadn't quite left me, and that my mind wasn't exactly right; but it seemed real to me."

"And it is real now. You spoke of having a fever; some time you must tell me all about it. Now you must go home, for there's a heavy dew falling."

"It won't hurt me. There's too much strength and joy in my heart for that."

As they drew near the cottage, they could see a bright fire burning on the hearthstone.

"What will mother say?" said Mary. "It will seem to her, as it did almost to me, that you have risen from the dead."

"Why Mary, what made you stay so? I began to be afraid that something had happened to you," said Mrs. Selwyn, as she bent over the table to arrange the evening meal she had been preparing.

"And so there has," replied Mary, speaking in a voice which had so much of the old, cheery ring in it, as to cause her mother to look up with a sudden fear that she was relapsing into a state of mind too flighty to be healthful, which had more than once manifested itself during her protracted convalescence.

As Mrs. Selwyn looked up, Hartley was just entering the room.

"Do I see Mordaunt Hartley?" said she, running to meet him.

"Yes," he replied, "here I am, safe and sound."

"Well, I never did give you up, and never could. Something always seemed to whisper to me that I should see you again. But then I never dared say so to Mary, as I was afraid that it would awaken a hope that might never be realized, and that would have been cruel, after all she had gone through."

"There were only two of us saved, the cabin-boy and I. We held on to a piece of the wreck till morning, when we were taken off by an out-bound vessel."

"It will cure you of ever thinking of going to sea again, I hope," said Mrs. Selwyn.

"That is what I thought during that dreadful night," he replied.

"And you haven't changed your mind?" said Mary, with an imploring look.

"I certainly intend to remain on terra firma, for a few months, at least," he replied.

"You don't value your life as highly as some of your friends do," said Mrs. Selwyn.

"Ah, my dear madam, you've not the least idea what fascination there is in a sailor's life. When I stand on the deck of a good ship, with a serene sky, fresh breeze, and the blue waves sparkling in the sun, were it not for those left behind, I would ask for nothing better." And he commenced singing, in a deep, mellow voice:

"The sea—the sea—the open sea,
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions round."

"That's the way with you sailor boys," said Mrs. Selwyn. "You forget the storms and remember only the pleasant weather. We will try to be like them, and instead of anticipating

trouble, we will now think only of your safe return. Come, Mordaunt—take your old place at the table! These biscuits will suit you, I know. When I looked into the oven, and found how light they were, and how nice they were baking, I couldn't help remembering that there were some like them on the table, the last meal you ever took with us. I little thought of the happiness in store for us, and that you would be here to help eat them."

"They are white as the foam of the wave," said Mordaunt, breaking one of them open; "and I must confess that I have not seen anything of the kind to compare with them, during my absence."

"But why do you confine your praise to words? Why don't you eat some of them?" said Mrs. Selwyn, finding that he suffered the broken biscuit to remain untasted.

"Well, that is the best kind of praise, in a case like this," he replied; "but if the truth must be told, the fullness of my joy at finding myself here with you and Mary, after so much danger and suffering, is such, that I care very little about eating."

"It is pretty much the same with Mary, I suspect," said Mrs. Selwyn, glancing at her daughter's animated countenance, "and I am sure it is with me."

"I shouldn't have come empty-handed, as I have now," said Mordaunt, drawing his chair up to the fire, after they rose from the table, "if our ship hadn't been wrecked. I had several trifles in my chest for Mary; neither were you forgotten," he added, turning to Mrs. Selwyn.

"Your chest came ashore," said Mary. "I was on the beach, and remember, when I saw it, that it seemed like a messenger sent from you, to let me know that I should never see you again. After that, I don't know what took place. All was a blank to me for a long time."

"And since her recovery, she has never seen what was in the chest," said her mother.

"How could I bear to, when I thought—"

Here Mary's voice faltered, and she left the sentence unfinished.

"I shall have the pleasure of showing them to you myself, now," Mordaunt hastened to say.

A few weeks later, there was a wedding in the brown cottage by the sea. Mary was robed in the pure white muslin, chosen for her by Mordaunt, in the Oriental land. The only ornament she wore was a few of those delicate, wax-like looking flowers, which may be found under the sere forest-leaves, late in autumn, woven with her soft, brown hair. If neither were what may be called brilliant or handsome, her face, luminous with the

light welling up from a heart full of peace and a serene joy, possessed a charm far more attractive.

For some months after his marriage, Mordaunt made no mention of resuming his sea-faring life. Still, when summer came, and the golden beams of the sun shone on the blue waves, their look of warmth and joy stole into his heart like the smiles of a syren. Though he said nothing about it to Mary, she knew that

"Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest,"

he longed to be again floating over the billowy breast of the sea. When, therefore, the command of a fine new ship was offered him by the owners, she could not find it in her heart to discourage his acceptance of it, though the thought of his leaving her cost her many a pang.

"You know," said he, by way of quieting her fears, "that I may count on prosperous voyages for the future—one such hair-breadth escape as I have had being as much as usually falls to the share of one person."

At any rate, he was ever afterward prosperous; and when at length the quiet of home began to possess increasing charms for him, a competency fairly won, enabled him to resign his employment.

THE BRIGHT SIDE.

Look on the bright side. It is the right side. The times may be hard, but it will make them no easier to wear a gloomy and sad countenance. It is the sunshine, and not the cloud that makes a flower. There is always before or around us that which should cheer and fill the heart with warmth. The sky is blue ten times where it is black once. You have troubles, it may be. So have others. None are free from them. Perhaps it is as well that none should be. They give sinew and tone to life—fortitude and courage to man. That would be a dull sea, and the sailor would never get skill, where there was nothing to disturb the surface of the ocean. It is the duty of every one to extract all the happiness and enjoyment he can, without and within him; and above all, he should look on the bright side of things. What though things do look a little dark? The lane will turn, and the night will end in broad day. In the long run, the great balance rights itself. What is ill becomes well—what is wrong, right. Men are not made to hang down either heads or lips, and those who do, only show that they are departing from the paths of true common sense and right. There is more virtue in one sunbeam, than a whole hemisphere of clouds and gloom. Therefore, we repeat, look on the bright side of things. Cultivate all that is warm and genial—not the cold and repulsive, the dark and morose.—*Anon.*

BEAUTY IN SORROW.

Most sad she sat, but O, most beautiful! If Sorrow stole A charm awhile from Beauty, Beauty's self Might envy well the charm that Sorrow lent To every perfect feature.

REYNOLDS.

A GOOD WORD, OR NOTHING.

BY AARON SMITH.

There is a species of slander abroad in the world,
Against a good neighbor, O, frequently hurled;
Not always with malice, with envy, or spite,
Yet fatal to friendship, good feeling and right.
Remember—and fall not your trust to fulfil—
Your brother, though absent, your brother is still;
Wherever you be, or whate'er may befall,
O, speak a good word, or say nothing at all!

There are duties we owe when together we're met,
We are all of us only too apt to forget;
Be blithe if you will when the wine cup is pressed,
But plant not a wound in an innocent breast;
Rebut the foul charge to the slanderer's shame,
Who, fendlike, would blacken another's fair fame,
Love is sweeter than honey—strife bitter as gall;
Then speak a good word, or say nothing at all.

[ORIGINAL.]

PLOT AND COUNTERPLOT.

BY CLARISSA W. HOLMES.

"Now, Mr. Charles Merton, are you really serious, or are you only amusing yourself at my expense?"

Such was the question addressed by my friend, Susan Nye, to the gentleman above mentioned, who had been making what is popularly called a "declaration."

"Amusing myself! Why, what do you take me for, Susie? Do you suppose I would trifle with the holiest?"

"O nonsense!" interrupted Susan, in the coolest manner possible; "don't you suppose I know that speech by heart, by this time? What novel have you lately looked into, Mr. Merton?"

"I assure you, Susan, that what I have said came from the heart, and from no novel that I ever read," answered Charles, a little hurt by Susan's manner.

"Well, there's nothing for you to get so angry about—at least, it is singular what a fuss men make over trifles. Fortunately, their anger, like their love, cools very quickly."

"Now, Susan, you are unjust, and let me add, very unkind, else you would not persist in twisting my words as you do. But I've had no answer to my question yet, and I am getting impatient."

"That's very wrong of you, Charles," returned the incorrigible Susan, "for I may keep you in suspense some time longer yet. Let me see, I believe your question was, whether I would make myself miserable for life by marrying you, wasn't that it?" Well, I will confess that I like

you just a little bit; but then again, I have a natural distrust of all men. Now, I dare say, by to-morrow you will be down on your knees making a similar declaration to Mary or Emma. You see I haven't much faith in you, Charles."

"No, I see you haven't," said Charles, smiling in spite of himself, at her saucy speech—"but I protest—"

"O, of course you do—I dare say you have a talent for protesting, but that's nothing to the purpose. The question is, how long are you going to give me to reflect upon your proposal?"

"One minute, precisely." And Charles took out his watch.

"One minute! A month, you mean, or two, if I should require it—and that isn't a bit too long time to discover whether you really love me alone, or half a dozen other young ladies. Now be reasonable, Charles."

But Charles wouldn't be reasonable. He declared and protested, and in the midst of his declarations and protestations, Susan escaped and ran up stairs.

Now there was no denying that Mary Ward, Susan Nye, and myself, were three of the wildest girls that ever infested a house. Susan and I had come to spend the summer with our friend Mary in her country home, and were enjoying ourselves as much as possible, when who should come to interrupt our pleasure, but Charles Meriton, Mr. Ward's nephew, and a stranger to both Susan and me? We soon found, however, that Charles was as merry and light-hearted as any of us, and hand in glove in all our schemes, and so it happened that we soon took him into our confidence, and spoiled him completely, as Mr. Ward said. For all this kindness on our part, Charles was so basely ungrateful as to fall in love with, and propose to Susan. And the particulars of this proposal we heard from Susan herself, immediately after her memorable flight up stairs.

Now Susan was tolerably good-looking, tolerably well off, and somewhat of a flirt into the bargain. But those who knew her well, had long since discovered that beneath this apparently heartless exterior, there existed a heart as warm and sensitive as one could wish.

"Now," said Susan, when she had related such portions of the conversation as would be sufficient to show us how the case stood—interrupted, I must say, by many an "ah!" and "O!" from us—"now, girls, I've formed a scheme that will convince me whether Charles is in earnest or not—are you willing to help me?"

Of course we readily promised, and in half an hour we had arranged to our satisfaction every

particular of the wonderful scheme, which was to carry conviction to Susan's mind. The next day, as Charles was to be absent till afternoon upon business, was the time selected to put our scheme in operation. Charles came home about four in the afternoon, passed up to his own room, and soon after came rushing down into the porch where Mary and I sat sewing, holding an open letter in his hand.

"What does this all mean, girls? Where is Susan?"

"Gone," was my answer.

"Gone, actually gone, and leaving me only this unsatisfactory letter? I really believe this is some joke."

"Ask Mrs. Ward if you wish to be satisfied. Susan went away very unwillingly, but there was not even an hour's time to waste, else she would have waited till you came. She had time only to write that letter."

"Couldn't her distant relatives take any other time to catch fevers but the present," said Charles, with the nearest approach to ill-humor that I ever knew him to indulge in. "It's the most provoking thing that ever happened."

Poor fellow! I actually began to pity him when I witnessed his terrible disappointment—but it was too late for me to repent now.

"We are to have a visitor soon," said Mrs. Ward, the next morning at the breakfast-table.

"I expect to-morrow afternoon, an aunt of mine whom I have not seen for many years. Though she is quite old, and very eccentric, she is one of the kindest-hearted people that ever lived. I hope you will all like her, and make her visit agreeable, for she is very fond of young people."

Charles, who was in a state of absent-mindedness, endeavoring to balance his spoon upon the edge of his cup, muttered something which different people interpreted different ways. Mrs. Ward supposed Charles was expressing his intention of making Aunt Hannah's visit agreeable, and thanked him accordingly. Mary and I thought otherwise, but then we were not sure about the matter.

"Are you more ready, young ladies?" was Charles's question, the next day, as he strode into our presence, with the look of a martyr. Mary and I put away our work and prepared for a walk, for we had solemnly promised Charles that we would go down to the station with him to receive Aunt Hannah.

As we approached the depot, the train came rushing along, and when it had fairly stopped, a crowd of passengers poured upon the platform. In vain we looked for any one who might resemble Aunt Hannah. Upon the face of Charles

there was a look of exultation, but, as I still observed him, I saw his eyes suddenly fixed in one direction, and the glow of exultation fading into a look of horror. I turned my eyes towards the train and there, just emerging from the rear car, was a venerable figure surmounted by a hideous black bonnet. The next instant Charles sprang forward, and we soon saw him guiding the tottering steps through devious ways, towards the spot where we stood. Nothing could exceed the attention and the deference which Charles showed towards Aunt Hannah upon our homeward walk. And much did the venerable lady need his care, for she seemed exhausted with her journey, and leaned heavily upon her companion's arm.

"Have you had a pleasant journey, madam?" was Charles's question, by way of opening a conversation.

"A pleasant journey! Now, young man, what pleasure could a person of my age expect in travelling? I declare I think it a lucky thing I ever got so far alive." And here Aunt Hannah in a very energetic manner suddenly unfurled a huge green silk umbrella.

The sight of Charles, with an enormous old-fashioned basket upon one arm and Aunt Hannah upon the other, and the well-worn umbrella, which, owing to the unsteady grasp of the old lady, had a propensity for leaning upon the shoulder of her companion, was enough to upset my gravity, but I contrived to preserve a sober countenance until I had reached the solitude of my own room.

"How far is it to Sallie's, young man?" asked Aunt Hannah, turning her gaze upon Charles.

Charles informed her as to the exact distance to Mrs. Ward's, and the old lady continued in a musing tone:

"Sallie used to be one of the smartest people I ever knew—always up and hard at work before other folks began to think of such a thing—and such a famous hand at cakes and pies and jellies! Young man, are you fond of jellies?"

This question fired at him like a ball from a cannon, was rather too much for Charles's gravity. He blushed and stammered, and muttered something that was inaudible.

"Ha!" said Aunt Hannah, stopping suddenly, and looking suspiciously at her companion, "you've lost my basket." A sight of that article, however, quieted her apprehensions, and the old lady resumed her walk.

That evening, contrary to our expectations, Aunt Hannah appeared among us dressed in a well preserved silk gown, cut in the quaintest fashion, and a huge white cap, the border of which hung down over her face. A pair of im-

mense spectacles through which she peered curiously, gave Aunt Hannah an exceedingly venerable look.

"Ham, young man," said the visitor, seating herself near Charles, for whom she seemed to have taken a violent liking, and as she seated herself, glancing sharply at Mary and me, "you seem to be fond of the society of young ladies."

"Yes, madam, and of the society of elderly ladies also," was Charles's grave and polite answer.

At these words a genial glow overspread Aunt Hannah's face, and she stroked her dress complacently. Then taking a skein of yarn from her pocket, she requested Charles's assistance in holding it, and so slow were her movements and so often interrupted by sage remarks, the long hours of that evening, which we were to have devoted to the reading of an interesting book, were passed by Charles holding his hands in mid-air, watching the slow winding of the yarn, and answering in monosyllables the old lady's interesting remarks.

A week passed by very quietly. Aunt Hannah sewed and knitted, and seemed as fond as ever of talking to Charles. But, strange to say, since the first evening of her arrival, Charles had shown a marked repugnance for her society. He failed in none of the attentions that are usually expected from gentlemen to ladies, and elderly ladies in particular, but his manner was much changed. He had more than once remarked to Mrs. Ward, that her aunt was, indeed, very eccentric, and this had been said in such a peculiar tone, that we had many secret misgivings. It was evident that Aunt Hannah also perceived the change in her favorite, and was affected by it, for oftentimes we detected her stealing anxious glances at Charles, and then hastily withdrawing her eyes, when there was danger of his observing her.

For some time also, Mary and I had received but very little attention from our former faithful friend and ally. He was often absent a great part of the day, hunting, fishing, riding—sometimes alone, and sometimes with friends in the neighborhood. We saw but little of him, therefore—and even when he was at home, he was more reserved than formerly, had lost his usual light, merry tone, and altogether seemed a very different person from what he had been. Gradually a gloom stole over the whole household. We missed Susan's saucy speeches and Charles's contagious merriment. Aunt Hannah grew more silent and dejected, and often folded her hands and sighed, but as yet had said nothing about making an end to her visit. Mary and I settled down into two paragons of sobriety, and began

to be quoted in the household as quiet, industrious girls. Such was the state of affairs, when one morning Charles came rushing in, in his old, merry way, bowed most obsequiously to Aunt Hannah, who chanced to be in the room, waltzed Mary about till she was dizzy, and then addressed himself suddenly to Aunt Hannah.

"Did you ever see a waterfall, madam?"

"Law, yes, many a time," was the old lady's answer.

"But I know you never saw one that would equal ours," said Charles, mentioning a famous waterfall, four or five miles from us. "Now I've been thinking, madam, that we ought to get up a party and take you to see it. Let me see,"—and the young gentleman assumed a musing tone—"you make one, Mary and Emma, three, and Aunt Ward and myself, five—just enough to fill the carriage. We will take some eatables with us, and make a regular picnic of it, spending the whole day there. How should you like the plan, madam, and young ladies?"

We professed ourselves delighted, and Aunt Hannah arose and made Charles a little old-fashioned curtesy, her countenance beaming with delight.

"You will be sure and recollect the day, madam," said Charles, lingering upon the subject with strange pertinacity.

Aunt Hannah rose again, tottered across the room, and laying her trembling hand upon the shoulder of Charles, said in trembling accents—"Young man, I will remember, you have made me quite happy."

There was a peculiar look upon Charles's face, at this movement, the least possible smile played for one instant about his mouth, and then, with a little shrug of the shoulders, he strode from the room. Half an hour later, he came down stairs with a letter in his hand, and inquired if we had any commands at the post-office, as he was going there.

Wednesday came bright and beautiful as one could wish. Charles was all animation, and having packed us into the carriage in a scientific manner, including the eatables and the hideous black bonnet, he placed himself in the driver's seat, and we were soon dashing along through the pleasant country roads. We drew up at the ruins of an old mill, which stood in the vicinity of the waterfall, and as we dismounted from the carriage, Charles threw a rapid glance over the landscape, and then suddenly exclaimed:

"How provoking! there is another party coming for the day, I should judge. However, there is room enough for all of us."

As he spoke, a light, handsome carriage drew

up the other side of the mill, and from it dismounted two ladies and a gentleman. It was indeed very provoking, as Charles had said, but then it was nothing more than might have been expected, for the vicinity of the old mill was a famous place for picnic parties. Giving one arm to Mrs. Ward, and the other to Aunt Hannah, Charles led the way to the waterfall, which presented a very picturesque sight. We had viewed it from all sides, had lavished abundant praises upon it, and then the two elder ladies being somewhat weary, seats were found for them among the rocks, and we, the younger portion of the party, strolled off for a further ramble. When we rejoined our party, we discovered the three strangers sitting upon the rocks at a little distance, ever and anon casting somewhat curious glances in our direction.

"What an agreeable face!" was Mrs. Ward's exclamation, as one of the stranger ladies turned to take a survey of our party.

It was indeed an agreeable face, and not only that, but the stranger was quite young and striking in appearance. Charles started suddenly, and with some exclamation that was inaudible to us, dashed over the rocks, and we soon beheld him shaking hands with the strangers, and then with the air of an old acquaintance, he seated himself by the younger lady, and soon was engaged in what appeared to be a deep and interesting conversation.

Aunt Hannah darted fiery looks in Charles's direction, and muttered to herself. We were much surprised, but supposed that Charles had found some old acquaintance, and would soon rejoin us. At length, to our great relief we saw him arise and approach us, but not alone, for the lady took his arm, as if for support upon the slippery rocks, and the two came forward slowly.

"Allow me to present to you, ladies, Miss St. Claire, an old friend of mine. I have had the good fortune to persuade her to join our party, whilst her brother and sister extend their ride."

Miss St. Claire bowed somewhat haughtily to each one of us, stared somewhat long and curiously at Aunt Hannah, and then turned to her companion with some remark. Aunt Hannah looked anything but delighted with Charles's good fortune in securing Miss St. Claire's company, and still less satisfied with the stare with which she was greeted, but she said nothing.

The day passed somewhat wearily to us, for Charles had no thoughts for anybody else but Miss St. Claire. He had contrived to whisper to us, or rather to Aunt Hannah, that Miss St. Claire was an "old flame" of his, and had

lavished most abundant praises upon her, to all of which Aunt Hannah was slow to respond. Miss St. Claire seemed to view Aunt Hannah as an antiquated curiosity, for she took every opportunity to stare at her in a way that made that lady, old as she was, blush in a very becoming manner.

Dinner-time came, and that meal, through our efforts, presented a very inviting appearance; but nobody seemed to care much about it, for Charles and Miss St. Claire had so much to say, that they scarcely allowed a minute to eat, and as for the rest of us, we had somehow or other lost our appetites. The afternoon sun was quite warm, so we adjourned to the old mill, and seating ourselves upon some boards, talked in a somewhat doleful strain, until finally, as if by common consent, we relapsed into perfect silence. Charles and Miss St. Claire had not as yet joined us, and unconsciously my thoughts wandered away to them and to their apparently accidental meeting. Suddenly there was the sound of voices below us, and the missing ones of our party approached our quarter, but apparently without perceiving us, for they seated themselves upon a pile of boards lower down. Charles was speaking to his companion in a somewhat tender tone.

"Yes, Charlotte, I did love her, but she distrusted me so much, and treated me so shamefully, that she is no longer worthy of my esteem. Any woman,"—and here Charles raised his voice—"who will descend to subterfuge to test a man's affections, when she has not the slightest reason to doubt it, deserves to be forgotten. Now, I love you only, and this time I fancy I shall not be rejected, and put off with cold reasonings."

Miss St. Claire's answer was inaudible, but we judged that it was favorable. A moment Aunt Hannah sat as if frozen, and then she started up with flashing eyes, and darting swiftly over the pile of boards, confronted the lovers.

"Charles, how dare you?" was her angry exclamation.

Charles glanced at her one instant, and then turning deliberately round to us, while a slight sneer curled his lip, remarked in a quiet tone:

"Why, really, ladies, Aunt Hannah grows frolicsome, doesn't she? Allow me to say, madam, that such antics are very unbecoming at your time of life."

The sneer and accompanying remark were too much for Aunt Hannah. She tore off her cap, spectacles and false hair, and throwing them far from her in disgust, cried:

"Now, do you know me, Charles?"

"Why, how do you do, Miss Nye?" said Charles, without expressing the least surprise. "Allow me to present to you Miss St. Claire, a particular friend of mine. Have your relatives quite recovered from the fever?"

In spite of her efforts, the tears started to Susan's eyes, and she turned humbly away, as Charles, drawing his companion's arm through his, passed out from the mill, and walked slowly away.

"How blind and foolish I have been," murmured Susan, throwing herself down in an agony of sorrow that would not be controlled. "I might have known that no honorable man would submit to such a childish trick. And well have I been punished, for I have destroyed my own happiness forever. Leave me, I wish to be alone."

We did leave her, and wandered sadly about, ashamed of, and vainly regretting our own share in the scheme that was to have promised so much amusement, but which would cause a lifelong sorrow to at least one of our party. At length, seeing nothing of Susan, and somewhat alarmed at her long absence, we went back to the mill with heavy hearts, and discovered—not Susan dissolved in tears—but Susan sitting by Charles's side, with a very subdued, but nevertheless happy look. Miss St. Claire sat a little distance off, viewing the scene with great complacency, and seemingly without the slightest tinge of jealousy. There had evidently been a thorough explanation between Charles and Susan, for both looked uncommonly happy, and Charles said to us with one of his old, arch looks:

"Ladies, this is Aunt Hannah without her spectacles, and this," turning to Miss St. Claire, "is my cousin, and ready assistant in all schemes. I really do not know which to admire most, your plot, or my counterplot—but both have resulted happily, as Susie has promised never to distrust me again."

THE OKRA PLANT.

The consumption of this plant has materially increased within a few years. When the pods are in a fresh state they are used for soup, and give off a mucilage which enriches the soup materially, while the less soluble portions of the pod are softened together with the seeds, and produce an admirable pottage. The "gumbo" of the South is made with this plant. The soup is always easy of digestion, and very nutritious. When the plant is suffered to ripen the seeds are large and hard, and the amount produced is very great; these, by being burned, produce a good imitation of coffee, while the fibrous character of the pod strongly recommends it to paper-makers.

—*Botanic Journal.*

A Blunder-Buss—Kissing the wrong woman.

[ORIGINAL.]

TO-DAY.

BY MARGARET VERNE.

God help me—God help me, to-day,
For my tired hands fall listlessly down;
For my feet have stopped in the way:
God help me, to-day!

God help me—God help me, to-day!
The flowers are gone, the wind blows shrill,
And I cannot remember a May:
God help me, to-day!

God help me—God help me, to-day,
For the autumn is dead at my door,
And the clouds are lowering and gray:
God help me, to-day!

God help me—God help me, to-day!
My heart is lost in the cruel cold;
Its blood drops red in the frozen way:
God help me, to-day!

God help me—God help me, to-day!
The mountains stand dark 'gainst the sky;
The sun lies low in the crimson west,
And my heart is lost from love's sweet way:
God help me, to-day!

[ORIGINAL.]

IN A COBWEB.

BY ESTHER BERNÉ.

"I TELL you it will be impossible for me to go," was Ruth Morley's decided answer, as she plucked to pieces a beautiful crimson flower, which her companion had just presented her.

"I know you have told me so once or twice," returned Paul Upton, good humoredly, "but ladies have so many whims now-a-days, that it isn't best to take the first answer, nor perhaps the second as decided."

"Well, take it or not, just as you please; my mind, at least, is made up." And Ruth petulantly buried her small feet in a mass of dead leaves.

"Well, Ruth, had I guessed the fate of that unfortunate flower, I should have—"

"Kept it; well, I wish you had." And as a blast of the cold north wind at that moment rattled the dead leaves at her feet, Ruth shivered and turned upon her homeward way.

Her thoughts, as she walked slowly through the desolate fields, which in the summer time had looked so lovely, were not enviable ones by any means. Twice or thrice upon her way home, she turned with a half-intention of going back to tell Paul that she would attend the party his

sister gave that night, but then pride came to her aid.

"No, I told him I wouldn't go, and I must keep my word, else he will think me inconsistent. Besides that, I haven't a suitable dress to wear, and I hear that Paul's cousins from the city, those rich and beautiful Lane girls, are to be there—of course, they will be dressed splendidly, and will look most contemptuously upon my plain brown Thibet. O dear, how I do wish I was rich!"

And then Ruth, heedless of the cutting wind against which her thin shawl was very little protection, dreamed she was rich;—how comfortable she would make her poor father's old age, with how many blessings she would surround him—blessings which the hard-working man had never known all his life. And Harry—poor, restless Harry, he should go to college, and should have all the books he wanted, and in time he would become a great man.

"So you've got home at last, have you?"

How little Ruth started, and how her golden castles shivered and fell to pieces at the sound of that voice, and at the sight of that great, coarse, red-faced woman.

"Yes, I've got home," was Ruth's sullen answer, to her step-mother's salutation.

"Well, you might as well spend the whole day out of doors, as for all the work you do in the house. Now make haste and set the table, and make yourself useful for one minute."

There was no answer to this, but Ruth's face expressed defiance as plainly as if she had replied in words.

The chilly, uncomfortable evening drew on. In a corner by themselves sat Ruth and Harry, the latter restless as ever, and both sullen and silent, for their step-mother's loud voice filled the whole room. It was the usual way of spending the evening in their uncomfortable and unlovely home. Harry was more than usually restless and depressed that night, for all had gone wrong with him the last two or three days. Ruth was thinking somewhat bitterly of Mr. Upton's brilliantly lighted rooms, of the gay company, the animated faces, and, must we confess it? of Paul Upton, whom her little heart cared a great deal more about than it would admit even to itself.

"Come out, Ruth, and walk with me—I have something to tell you," whispered Harry, at length, as hour after hour passed away, and both grew more restless. Ruth rose with alacrity, resumed the bonnet and shawl which she had thrown over a chair, and in an instant stood ready to go. They passed out unmolested, and

for a moment stood undecided as to which way they should turn their steps. Then, impelled by an irresistible impulse, Ruth turned towards the foot-path, which as she well knew, would lead them in sight of Mr. Upton's house. Harry walked by her side, silent as ever. Ruth minded not that the dead leaves and the withered grass damped her dress, nor that the wind felt more chilly and uncomfortable than ever. Both brother and sister were too full of thoughts to heed the weather. What a brilliant light streamed from every window of Mr. Upton's large house, as the two wanderers stealthily approached it! Harry would have paused at a suitable distance, but Ruth urged him gently forward.

"Please come a little nearer, Harry."

Ruth was not satisfied until they had gained a station immediately under one of the windows, a position which commanded a view of both parlors, and which was likewise comfortably shielded from observation.

Harry made some faint objection as to the impropriety of the thing, but Ruth made no answer. Poor child! she was too busily occupied at that moment to care whether what she was doing was proper or not. Within there were gay music and animated faces, and anon a silvery burst of laughter, which floated out to the ears of the two lone watchers.

"What splendid dresses!" thought Ruth—"how glad I am I didn't come!"

"O, Ruth, just look—what a beautiful face! That is like some of the old paintings. There, she has seated herself upon that sofa opposite. Don't you see her?" And Harry leaned forward and gazed with a look of the most eager admiration.

Ruth drew him back. She had looked and noted well the lovely face shaded by the fair hair, which was now turned with an eager, animated look upon her companion, Paul Upton. Paul was talking most earnestly to the strange lady—so earnestly that he seemed not to heed anything that was passing around him. Their conversation seemed to grow more and more interesting and confidential, for Paul's face unconsciously approached nearer the lady's, and she seemed listening most attentively, ever and anon darting a bright, arch look at her companion, which look poor Harry, shivering outside, likened to a sunbeam.

Yes, Ruth's eye had noted well every detail of the scene—the exquisite and tasteful dress of the stranger, that told of wealth—the tall, queenly form, the fair complexion and rose-tinted cheek, and above all, the interest which the two occupants of the sofa seemed to take in each other—

none of these things had escaped from Ruth's glance. How meanly she thought of herself at that moment—of her diminutive form, her dark complexion, to which the rose-tint was most unbecoming—her poor attire! She brushed away from her forehead her rich, dark hair with a disdainful motion. She recollected now that some one had once called her witch-like and weird like; witch-like indeed, she must look when compared with the lovely stranger within. But then Ruth's pride came to her aid again, and her dark eyes flashed un-seen in her hiding place.

Should she hate Paul Upton? No, he was not worth hating; she would forget him, and never look upon him again. She would live for her father and Harry, and sometime in the future, when she was rich and famous, Paul might regret her and might seek to renew the acquaintance. She imagined to herself the scorn with which she would receive his advances, when suddenly she shivered as in an ague-fit. A casual glance at the window had shown her Paul and the stranger lady gazing out into the night, and in an instant Ruth imagined she was discovered. But the next moment the idea seemed absurd, for the two had passed from the window, and were now lost to sight.

Harry, who had forgotten everything in his admiration of the lovely stranger, was now awakened to life by Ruth's shiver.

"Why, Ruth, here you are chilled through, and dear me, how thin your shawl is. How imprudent of us to stand so long here. But that was such a beautiful picture, Ruthy." And Harry laughed and then sighed at the recollection.

Ruth made no answer, only clung tighter to her brother's arm, as they turned back into the solitary night. Away from the bright windows, and Harry's gloomy thoughts returned. He broke out abruptly:

"Ruth, I am going to the city to seek my fortune, as many better men than I have done. I shall die here, leading this inactive life. Have you anything to say against this plan, Ruthy?"

"Nothing," said Ruth, "excepting that I shall go with you."

"Nonsense, Ruth! Of course, it will be impossible for you to go. What would you do when you got there?"

"Try my fortune writing for the newspapers. And if I succeed, as of course I shall"—and here Ruth affected a merry tone—"and if you get steady employment, what a pleasant home we could make by ourselves. Nobody should know where we were until we got rich and famous, and then we would ride home in a coach and four, and create a nine days wonder."

Harry smiled at the pleasant vision, and then relapsed into a deeper fit of musing than ever. But before they had reached home that night, it was decided that they should go to the city to seek their fortunes. And so it happened that one cold, raw morning, before most people were up, Harry and Ruth stole like two guilty things through the garden gate, turned to take one last look at the little cottage and the desolate landscape, and then leaving the old things behind, their feet were treading new ground, and their eyes were looking upon new scenes.

"Well, what news, Harry?" asked Ruth, as she busied herself putting the finishing touches to the table, set for their evening meal.

"None," said Harry, moodily playing with his knife and fork, utterly regardless of the nice supper which Ruth had been at such pains to prepare for him.

"I have been all over the city to-day," continued Harry, "and have offered myself as office-boy, or porter, or almost anything, but nobody seemed in want of me. Ruth, if the worst comes to the worst, shall we go back, or starve?"

"Starve," said Ruth, decidedly. "But you will try again to-morrow, Harry, and perhaps you will succeed better. See what I have got here—you shall take them to some publisher to-morrow." And Ruth held up three or four rolls of paper, upon which she had busied herself the last two or three days.

Some days passed away. Ruth's manuscripts had been offered for sale. Some had been rejected and some sold well, but it was rather discouraging and mortifying work, and poor Harry dreaded, more than he dare tell Ruth, to inquire the fate of what had cost her so many busy hours. At length, when Harry had well nigh despaired, he found employment as errand-boy in the office of a wealthy merchant, and that evening he came home with elastic step and animated countenance, to tell Ruth the good news. He found his sister bending as usual over her writing, and proceeded to recount his day's experience, without noticing the efforts Ruth made to suppress a fit of coughing. In fact, ever since that evening walk to Mr. Upton's house, Ruth had been troubled with a most obstinate and singular cough, which no remedy she applied could seem to subdue. Lately it had been quite painful for her to bend over her writing, and her household duties tired her most unaccountably.

"Why, Ruthy, how handsome you are growing," was Harry's exclamation, as he glanced at his sister, after relating his good fortune.

In fact, Ruth did look unusually well that eve-

ning. Her eyes sparkled, and there was a bright spot of bloom on either cheek. No one could have said but what the rose-tint was extremely becoming now. It was quite fortunate that Harry had found employment, for after a while Ruth found it utterly impossible to endure the constraint that writing imposed upon her. The very act of bending over, aggravated her cough to such a degree that she told Harry one morning that she should take a vacation of a week or two.

"You have been quite honored to-day, Ruth," was Harry's salutation, as he rushed like a whirlwind into Ruth's presence, after the day's work was through. "I don't believe there ever was a better man than Mr. Lane. I happened to say to him the other day that you had a cough, and to-day he inquired after you, and said if you had no objections, his daughter, Miss Lane, would call upon you. What do you say to that, Miss Ruth?"

"To tell the truth," was Ruth's answer, "I had much rather she wouldn't come. You know I have a great dislike to strangers—but for your sake, I shall receive her properly."

Harry was rather worried about Ruth's cough; it didn't seem to improve any as the weeks went on, and Ruth went about so slowly, and seemed to get weary so often, that Harry seriously began to think it would be best to summon a physician. But Ruth laughed at his anxiety, reminded him that winter was a bad time to get cured of a cough, and declared that in the spring she should be as well as usual.

There was a knock at their door one evening, and as Harry opened it he encountered his employer, Mr. Lane, and a lady, whom Mr. Lane introduced as his daughter. Poor Harry stared in the utmost astonishment, and then blushed a great deal more than the occasion seemed to warrant, for in Miss Lane he recognized the lovely stranger whom he had admired through Mr. Upton's window. As for Ruth, she had started forward at sight of the lady, crimsoning violently from excitement, and then suddenly she sank back upon her seat, a death-like pallor crept slowly over her face—and then there was a wild cry from Harry. From Ruth's mouth there issued a crimson stream, and her eyes were closed, as if in death.

Week succeeded week, and the genial days of spring came slowly on. Ruth would recover—the doctor had said so. And poor Harry was wild with delight, and worked harder and more manfully than ever. During Ruth's illness he had been promoted to the position of clerk in Mr. Lane's store, and every evening he had the

privilege of entering Mr. Lane's house, for there had Ruth been removed at the commencement of her illness.

Yes, Ruth would recover, but she must be tended with great care—and truly no sister could have watched over and nursed her more carefully than had Miss Lane through those many weeks. And Ruth felt very grateful, more so than she could express. She no longer felt hardly towards Paul Upton—she had grown very quiet and gentle, altogether too quiet and gentle, Miss Lane said.

But our poor little heroine was not perfect, by any means. She wished it had been any one else but Miss Lane to whom she was indebted, and she longed to get away, and live a quiet life again with Harry. Miss Lane's lovely face sometimes gave her a very painful sensation.

"My dear little Ruth," said Miss Lane, one day, when for the twentieth time Ruth had declared that she was strong enough to go away, and for the twentieth time Miss Lane had declared that such a thing was impossible—"we are to have a visitor to-day, and I want you to look your prettiest. If you behave yourself well to-day, perhaps I sha'n't object to your going away by-and-by."

Afternoon came, and with it the visitor. Now Ruth hadn't cared one snap about the mysterious person, and scarcely looked up when the visitor entered the room. But how she started when her eyes encountered those of Paul Upton! How quickly a beautiful color flashed over her pale face, and how hard she strove to keep down the words of welcome that were upon her tongue. It was provoking that Miss Lane was called out of the room just at that moment, and that Ruth was obliged to entertain her visitor. Paul seated himself most boldly at her side, and then he began to talk to her just as he used to in the old times. Ruth felt uncomfortable—she wished Miss Lane would come back, and take care of this troublesome visitor.

"So, you dear, silly, independent little fly, what a cobweb you have got yourself into!"

A cobweb! What could he mean?

"Why, yes, a cobweb," said Paul, laughing. "Here has my cousin, Sophie Lane, woven her meshes about you, and here are the rest of the spiders come to enjoy the feast."

"Sophie Lane, Paul's cousin! How stupid Ruth had been not to have recollected that Lane was the name of Paul's uncle. And somehow the knowledge of this fact led to another, and then Ruth learned that Paul's conversation upon the night of the party had been about her, and that Sophie had been so interested, that she had

determined to make her acquaintance, which, as we have already seen, she did accomplish through Harry's means. In fact, there were so many explanations to be made, that when Miss Lane came back, neither Paul nor Ruth noticed her entrance, and so she prudently made her retreat again, smiling to herself.

And so it happened, as anybody with common sense might have predicted, that not long after there was another party, at Miss Lane's instead of Mr. Upton's, and Harry and Ruth didn't stand outside, but were rather prominent actors in the performance that took place that night—a performance in which little Ruth Morley became Ruth Upton, and in which Harry and Miss Lane officiated as bridesgroom and bridesmaid.

And Harry—the restless fellow—contrived to wheedle himself into Sophie's confidence to such an extent, that when he became a junior partner in the house of Lane & Co., he persuaded Sophie to repeat the performance, which had been enacted in the case of Ruth, with a very little variation, of course.

In process of time, Ruth's step-mother died, and then Ruth had the pleasure of making her father's old age comfortable and happy. Though Ruth and Harry never became very rich, or very famous, yet singularly enough they were both contented and happy.

LILY M. SPENCER.

Her parents (whose name is Martin) were born in France, but removed to England soon after their marriage. They were persons of education, refinement, and good social standing. Mr. Martin taught French in academies in Plymouth and Exeter, and gave lectures at his own house on scientific subjects, especially optics and chemistry. Mrs. Martin at one time gave instruction in a ladies' seminary in London. Lily owed all her proficiency to her parents' judicious training, and never went to a school. Her talent for drawing began early to exhibit itself. One day when she was about five years old, she got at some diagrams her father had prepared for a lecture on optics, and drew an eye so correctly, that her turn for art was at once perceived.—*Women Artists in all Ages.*

THE BIBLE.

Out of it has come all pure moralities. From it have sprung all sweet charities. It has been the motive power of regeneration and reformation to millions of men. It has comforted the humble, consoled the mourning, sustained the suffering, and given trust and triumph to the dying. The wise old man has fallen asleep with it folded to his breast. The simple cottager has used it for his dying pillow, and even the innocent child has breathed his last happy sigh with his fingers between its promise-freighted leaves.—*Timothy Tucomb.*